

Prescription for romance

Fictional alumna heats up story set in Kansas

Large animal veterinarians now have a fictional character they can relate to. Meet Dr. Mattie Evans, an imaginary K-State graduate who finds romance and drama in the new novel, “Snow Melts in Spring,” by a Kansas author, Deborah Vogts. The background for Mattie’s character relied on being a veterinarian.

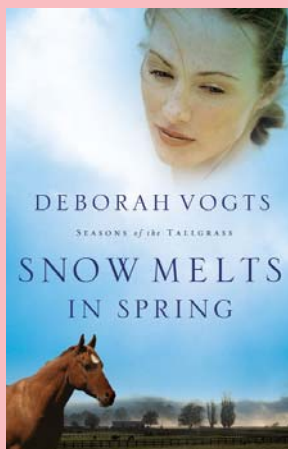
“I knew I wanted the story to start with a horse injured in an accident, so from there, my characters began to take shape,” Vogts said. “The female lead would be struggling to keep her business going, and the male lead would be the horse’s owner. The story pretty much took off and ran from that point on.”

Vogts says she had to do some research to better understand and develop Mattie’s character. “I needed Mattie to save a horse, Dusty, and not put him down,” she said. “It was integral to manipulate all the details of the car accident just so. To do that, I visited with four different veterinarians about possible scenarios and recovery plans.”

Although “Snow Melts in Spring” is categorized as a romance novel, Vogts says there’s much more to it. “My readers are connecting on various levels — family relationships, horse lovers, lovers of the Flint Hills — even football fans,” Vogts said. “As for how Mattie’s profession shapes her personality, her love for life and animals come through strong and clear in the book. In one scene when her clinic burns, she risks her life in repeated attempts to save her patients. And when she’s unable to save them all, she considers herself a failure. The fact that she lost several of her patients prior to the opening scene in the book is also of great concern for her. She struggles not to become attached to Dusty, for fear she’ll lose him too.”

Vogts says her book mirrors many of the interests in her life. Vogts grew up in southeast Kansas on a farm with pigs, cattle, horses and sheep. She studied English and journalism at Emporia State University. After college, Vogts lived in Topeka, but missed the wide-open spaces of her childhood, so she went back home where she married a high school classmate. Vogts and her husband have three daughters and raise and train American Quarter Horses.

Vogts says she has heard from one veterinarian about the book. “This veterinarian now lives in Texas, but had once lived in the Flint Hills and had worked as a large animal veterinarian,” Vogts said. “In fact, it was uncanny how much of her life mirrored that of Mattie’s. She hasn’t read the book yet. I’m praying she likes it and approves of my veterinary scenes.” 🐾



Novelist Deborah Vogts writes about a fictional CVM graduate in her book.

In Memoriam

CORRECTION: In the Spring 2009 *Healing Hands*, we mistakenly reported the death of Dr. Gary L. Zimmerman. The listing should have been for Dr. Gary R. Zimmerman. Dr. Gary L. Zimmerman is a member of the class of 1977 and lives in Livingston, Mont. We regret the error and apologize. The correction to Dr. Gary R. Zimmerman’s listing appears below.

Joseph L. Cavanaugh, DVM 1935
Wabasha, Minn., died April 20, 2006

Herbert P. Bolks, DVM 1939
Hull, Iowa, died May 8, 2009

Robert K. MacDonald, DVM 1940
Newburgh, N.Y., died April 21, 2009

Warren J. Dedrick, DVM 1941
Jamul, Calif., died April 17, 2009

Bill J. Myers, DVM 1943
Norman, Okla., died Aug. 17, 2009

Buford Winters, DVM 1943
Nowata, Okla., died Oct. 10, 2009

Walter C. Bowie, DVM 1947
Tuskegee, Ala., died Oct. 25, 2009

Z. Olen Pumphrey, DVM 1947
Fort Branch, Ind., died July 18, 2009

Arden G. Kemler, DVM 1950
Corinth, Texas, died April 23, 2009

Ross K. McPhail, DVM 1952
Republic, Mo., died June 7, 2009

Charles L. Page, DVM 1952
Frisco, Texas, died March 16, 2009

Edward J. Ackerman, DVM 1955
Omaha, Neb., died April 13, 2009

William A. Welty, DVM 1962
Phoenix, Ariz., died April 8, 2009

Jerald T. Waite, DVM 1964
Fenton, Iowa, died June 1, 2009

Ronald D. Schulte, 1971
Houston, Texas, died Sept. 6, 2009

Gary R. Zimmerman, DVM 1973
Holton, Kan., Dec. 23, 2008

Donald H. Mueller, DVM 1976
Vestal, N.Y., died Aug. 2, 2009

Hugh A. Rogers, DVM 1985
Whitefish, Mont., died April 1, 2009